

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Norstar Specialty Foods Corp.

#### Washington Manufacturing Services

#### Real Foods/Norstar Sees Great Gains with Lean

##### Client Profile:

Real Foods, a subsidiary of Norstar Specialty Foods in Seattle, Washington, manufactures bakery products and non-frozen food products (specializing in salads and dry and canned soups). Real Foods' customers range from boutique supermarkets to large distribution-type warehouses. They have a niche in the high quality, low volume market for pastas and salads. The company employs 45 people.

##### Situation:

Real Foods was having difficulty meeting the fast turnaround times required by their customers. They were experiencing a significant amount of overtime on both lines. They also wanted to expand their operations, but were out of floor space. The company brought in Washington Manufacturing Services (WMS), a NIST MEP network affiliate, to conduct Lean manufacturing training for the entire workforce.

##### Solution:

WMS brought in Rick Baker who did a Value Stream Map (VSM) on the bow tie pasta and salad lines. Following the VSM, Kaizen events focused on reducing the non-value added steps and better usage of Real Foods' existing floor space.

##### Results:

On the spinach bow tie pasta line:

- \* Reduced cycle time by 68 percent.
- \* Reduced Work in Process inventory by 44 percent.
- \* Increased throughput by 62.5 percent.
- \* Reduced floor space by 65 percent.
- \* Increased inventory by 60 percent.

On the salad line:

- \* Reduced floor space by 62 percent.
- \* Reduced shop floor queues by 27 percent.
- \* Decreased non-value-added work by 57 percent.
- \* Reduced cycle time by 60 percent.

##### Testimonial:

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